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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

1. The letter dated 25 November 1992 from the President of the Security Council (S/24852) conveyed the Security Council's agreement to my proposal to send a group of military, police and civilian personnel on an exploratory mission to Macedonia in order to prepare a report on which I could base a recommendation to the Security Council concerning a possible deployment of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Macedonia as recommended by the Co-Chairmen of the Steering Committee of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia and as requested by the competent authorities in Macedonia.

2. The mission was in Macedonia from 28 November to 3 December 1992. A summary of the report which it submitted to the Force Commander of UNPROFOR, Lieutenant-General Satish Nambiar, is attached for the information of the members of the Security Council (see annex).

3. It will be seen that the mission has recommended that a small UNPROFOR presence be established on the Macedonian side of that republic's borders with Albania and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) with an essentially preventive mandate of monitoring and reporting any developments in the border areas which could undermine confidence and stability in Macedonia or threaten its territory. This task could, in the mission's judgement, be performed by an infantry battalion, with appropriate logistic support, together with a group of 35 United Nations military observers.

4. It is further recommended that a small group of United Nations civilian police should also be deployed in the border areas to monitor the Macedonian border police. The rationale for this latter deployment is that incidents arising from illegal attempts to cross the border have recently led to increased tension on the Macedonian side. The mission believed that the presence of a small United Nations civilian police detachment would have a calming effect. Unlike the military deployment, however, this proposal has not yet received the consent of the competent Macedonian authorities.

5. General Nambiar has conveyed to me his agreement with the above proposals. I too endorse them, in the belief that a small United Nations

deployment of this kind on the Macedonian side of the borders will help Macedonia and the two neighbouring countries concerned to make safe passage through a potentially turbulent and hazardous period. I accordingly recommend that the Security Council authorize this further enlargement of UNPROFOR's mandate and strength on the lines proposed in the present report and its annex.

6. The emplacement and start-up costs of this deployment, should the Security Council approve my recommendation, would be met initially from the resources made available for UNPROFOR by the General Assembly at its current session. Should additional resources be required, recourse would be had to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and to the General Assembly, as appropriate.

Annex

Report of the UNPROFOR exploratory mission to Macedonia

(Summary)

INTRODUCTION

1. On the instructions of the Secretary-General, the Force Commander sent an UNPROFOR team of military, police and civilian personnel to Macedonia on an exploratory mission. The mission was asked to prepare a report on which the Secretary-General could base a recommendation to the Security Council for a substantive deployment of UNPROFOR in Macedonia. This report is submitted pursuant to that request.

2. The team was composed as follows: Brig. Gen. Bo Pellnas, Chief Military Observer (Head of Mission); Mrs. Y. Auger, Deputy Director of Civil Affairs and Senior Legal Adviser; Col. K. Hoglund, Chief Operations Officer; C/Supt. M. O'Rielly, Chief of Staff, United Nations Civilian Police (UNCIVPOL); Mr. James Connolly, Senior Administrative Officer; Supt. E. Jacobsen, United Nations Civilian Police; Supt. K. Moller, United Nations Civilian Police; Lt. Cdr. G. Rees, United Nations Military Observer; Cmdt. D. Murphy, United Nations Military Observer; Mr. Alan Roberts, Assistant to Deputy Director of Civil Affairs; Capt. B. Loggarfve, Staff Officer to Chief Military Observer; Ms. Maria Salvado, Secretary; Mr. E. Evripides, Communications Operator; Mr. H. Hilmarsson, Communications Technician.

3. The team arrived in the area of its mission on 28 November 1992 and departed on 3 December 1992. The mission met President Gligorov; Prime Minister Crvenkovski; Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Denko Maleski; Minister of Defence, Dr. Vlado Popovski; Minister of the Interior, Dr. Ljubomir Frokovski; and the Chief of the General Staff, General M. Arsovski. Meetings were also held at the operational level with senior military officers and senior police officers. In addition, meetings were held with representatives of the major political parties represented in the Legislature, as well as with representatives of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

4. Three operational teams conducted reconnaissances of the northern and western borders of Macedonia. The Senior Administrative Officer also visited the border areas to see the facilities which could be available in case of a possible deployment.

5. The mission received excellent cooperation and support from the authorities, greatly facilitating the performance of its tasks.

I. REQUEST BY MACEDONIA FOR A UNITED NATIONS PRESENCE

6. The mission sought, in its meetings with President Gligorov and other competent Macedonian authorities, to gain a full understanding of the circumstances which had caused the President to request from the Secretary-General a United Nations presence in Macedonia.

7. From the above-mentioned discussions, the main concern which emerged was that, if conflict erupted in Kosovo, the fighting would spill over into Macedonia. The mission was informed that Albania had stated that, in case of a conflict in Kosovo, it would intervene in support of the Albanians in Kosovo. To do this, its forces would have to go through Macedonia, since its road communications to Kosovo are through Macedonia. Albanians from Macedonia, it was surmised, would also enter the conflict. It was said that the western part of Macedonia would become a base for Albanian operations into Kosovo. It should be noted that ethnic Albanians form the majority of the population in the central and northern parts of the border areas with Albania, as well as in the western part of the border areas with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

8. In the view of the Macedonian authorities, the above developments could then set off a wider Balkan war. Albanian activities in Macedonia would provide a reason for the Yugoslav Army to enter Macedonia. Moreover, they expressed a general concern with regard to the possible territorial ambitions of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) on Macedonia. Statements recently made by certain nationalist sectors in Belgrade were cited.

9. The particular vulnerability of Macedonia, should hostilities break out in the area, was emphasized. When the Yugoslav National Army had left, it had taken with it all heavy weaponry and aircraft, as well as all border-monitoring equipment. The Macedonian army was, therefore, very lightly armed and lacked the equipment to monitor the borders effectively.

10. Another concern was that, if conflict erupted in Kosovo, there would be an exodus of refugees from Kosovo into Macedonia. This would have a destabilizing effect. It was pointed out to the Macedonian authorities that the lead agency to deal with this contingency would be UNHCR.

II. OBJECTIVES OF A POSSIBLE UNITED NATIONS PRESENCE

11. In the discussions with the Macedonian authorities, the mission sought to determine the objectives which they wished a United Nations presence to accomplish.

12. It emerged that what was sought was monitoring of the borders and reporting of any developments which could signify a threat to the territory of Macedonia. At the same time, a United Nations presence would serve as a deterrent to external aggression against Macedonia. Its presence would assist

in keeping potentially conflicting parties separate and would thus strengthen security in the region.

13. The mission sought also to determine whether a role for the United Nations in helping to calm any internal ethnic tensions, especially in the border areas, was envisaged. The role which UNCIVPOL could play in this respect was explained. The President stated that the internal situation was stable. Ethnic concerns were being dealt with through dialogue and negotiation. He did not see any need for United Nations assistance in this respect. In subsequent discussions with government officials, however, it appeared that an UNCIVPOL monitoring presence along the border would be welcome.

14. The situation in the border areas was thus of particular interest to the mission. At a meeting with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Debar on the western border with Albania it became clear that there are ethnic tensions in the area, where Albanians trying to enter Macedonia illegally have been killed by Macedonian soldiers. Incidents of this type could build up tensions within the Albanian community in these border areas.

Timing of a possible United Nations deployment

15. President Gligorov felt that a possible United Nations deployment should take place no later than one, or at the most two, months after the 20 December elections in Yugoslavia. This timing was based on the assessment that, if Macedonia were not recognized at the forthcoming European Community meeting of 11 and 12 December, and if nationalist elements prevailed in the 20 December elections in Belgrade, tensions could increase in Kosovo within a relatively short period. As previously described, this could have dangerous repercussions on Macedonia.

III. MEETINGS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF POLITICAL PARTIES

16. As already indicated, the mission also met with representatives of the main political parties in Parliament. All parties expressed support for a United Nations deployment in Macedonia. The representative of the Party of Democratic Prosperity, the main predominantly Albanian party, indicated, however, that they saw no need for a United Nations presence on the border with Albania because the source of conflict would not come from that direction, but from the north. Nevertheless, he also indicated that the areas of deployment was a matter for UNPROFOR to determine. In a separate meeting, the Albanian Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Debar on Macedonia's western border also indicated that they saw no need for a United Nations deployment on that border.

IV. THE MISSION'S ASSESSMENT

17. Taking the above-described meetings into account, the mission considers that a United Nations presence in the first instance should be deployed primarily in the northern and western border areas of Macedonia. Its objectives would be:

(a) To monitor the border areas and report to the Secretary-General, through the Force Commander, any developments which could pose a threat to Macedonia;

(b) By its presence, to deter such threats from any source, as well as help prevent clashes which could otherwise occur between external elements and Macedonian forces, thus helping to strengthen security and confidence in Macedonia.

18. An UNPROFOR presence should have military, civilian police and civilian components. The mission's views relating to the deployment of each of these components are set out below.

V. MILITARY ASPECTS OF A UNITED NATIONS DEPLOYMENT IN MACEDONIA

19. The border with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) is 240 km long and the border with Albania 182 km. Both borders are mountainous, more so to the west, with heights of 2,700 metres. All the routes that afford access by vehicle, or could be militarily exploited, between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Macedonia and between Albania and Macedonia, were identified and visited by the military members of the mission.

20. As mentioned earlier, the aims of a deployment should be to:

(a) Monitor Macedonia's borders with Albania and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and report all activities that might increase tension or threaten peace and stability;

(b) Stand between forces that might otherwise clash.

21. The Macedonian authorities did not expect the United Nations to defend its borders. It was the presence of United Nations forces that was most important. Given the aims above, the deployment of United Nations forces mainly in the actual border areas would seem to be the most appropriate.

Options for deployment

22. To achieve the aims, it would be necessary to maintain a constant presence by manning observation posts on a 24-hour basis. Because of road and weather conditions, each manning team would have to live close to its observation post. The task could be done by military observers, but their

numbers would need to be as high as if soldiers were used, and trained and skilled officers would be occupied with tasks that could be done by soldiers. It is therefore recommended that a battalion-sized infantry force of up to 700 persons be deployed from Debar on the western border northwards and eastwards as far as the Bulgarian border. The battalion should be formed of personnel with good winter training.

Recommended organization

23. A "Macedonian Command" should be added to UNPROFOR's structure with its headquarters in Skopje. The Commander should be a Brigadier-General with a personal and international staff, mainly for liaison purposes. The battalion headquarters and a battalion headquarters/logistics company should be able to provide the services needed by both the Commander's staff and the battalion commander. Three rifle companies would be needed. The battalion would need to be supported by a helicopter unit, which could be contracted from commercial sources.

United Nations Military Observers

24. The border area south of Debar should be covered by United Nations Military Observers, with a small headquarters in that region. A small number of Military Observers should also be deployed in the northern border area and attached to the headquarters in Skopje. The total requirement for Military Observers would be 35.

Summary of military needs

25. A United Nations presence in Macedonia to monitor the western and northern border areas should be achieved by the deployment of a battalion with sufficient command, control and support elements. The three rifle companies of this battalion should be deployed on the Macedonian side of the border between Debar and the Bulgarian border. The operation should be supported by military observers who would also constitute the main United Nations presence south of Debar.

VI. UNCIVPOL DEPLOYMENT

26. On the basis of an assessment of the organization of the local police and of the situation on the northern and western borders of Macedonia, it is considered that UNCIVPOL's mandate should essentially be to monitor the work of the local border police. On the western border, the UNCIVPOL presence would assist in calming any inter-ethnic tensions arising from perceptions that the Macedonian police had harassed or abused Albanians, mainly in the context of illegal border crossings.

27. Deployment would be along the northern and western borders. It is estimated that, under present circumstances, a total of 26 monitors would be required, 13 to monitor the northern border and 13 the western border.

VII. CIVIL AFFAIRS COMPONENT

28. If it were decided to establish an UNPROFOR presence in Macedonia, two Civil Affairs Officers would be required to perform liaison functions between UNPROFOR and the central and local authorities, as well as to provide political advice to the Commander. In addition, there would be a need for two Public Information Officers to implement, from the outset, a strong public information programme to ensure that the role of the United Nations presence is fully understood by the population.

VIII. ADMINISTRATION

29. Administrative support staff would be required to cover the following areas: communications, transport, maintenance, buildings management, general services, procurement, finance and personnel. Their numbers are set out in paragraph 30 below.

IX. SUMMARY OF PERSONNEL RESOURCES REQUIRED

30. Pending a further reconnaissance it is provisionally estimated that the personnel requirements would be:

(a) Military component:

(i) One battalion of up to 700 persons, comprising three rifle companies and a headquarters and logistics company;

(ii) 35 military observers;

(b) UNCIVPOL component: 26 civilian police monitors;

(c) Civil Affairs component: 4 Professional staff members, 2 international General Service staff, 4 local staff;

(d) Administration: 5 Professional staff members, 29 Field Service/General Service (international staff), 11 local staff;

(e) A number of local interpreters would also be necessary.